

Transition

Creating the Exploration Future

Michoud Assembly Facility Newsletter

NASA and Michoud in Transition: A Look Ahead

By Sheila Cloud, Michoud Transition Director



*Conceptual rendering of the new
Administration Building*

In this initial electronic installment of the Michoud Transition Update, I'd like to share some information about the future of NASA's Michoud Assembly Facility as an essential NASA manufacturing facility and an economic engine for the State of Louisiana's economy.

In March, NASA Administrator Michael Griffin submitted to Congress the agency's initial report on its workforce strategy for the transition from the space shuttle to the Constellation program. The document is available at:

http://www.nasa.gov/mission_pages/transition

The report outlines NASA's plan for redirecting its focus, resources and personnel over the next several years. NASA is preparing to complete the Space Shuttle Program by 2010 while at the same time implementing the agency mission outlined in the U.S. Space Exploration Policy. The Shuttle to Constellation Transition report is a living document, to be updated every six months. Newspaper headlines have focused on the ending of the shuttle program, and the loss of jobs that will regrettably but inevitably entail. At Michoud, the last space shuttle external tank will be shipped to Kennedy Space Center in 2010, ending decades of external tank manufacturing here.

What is not getting as much attention is the rest of the story, the Constellation and other work that is coming to Michoud. Just as Apollo gave way to shuttle, shuttle will give way to Constellation – but Michoud will continue to be an indispensable part of America's advancing space program.

NASA continues to depend on Michoud's extensive manufacturing capabilities and direct access to water transportation – two factors that have made the facility a vital part of NASA's activities since the Saturn rocket was built here in the 1960s.

Michoud will be the scene of development and delivery of hardware and

Recent/Upcoming Events

June 6 – William H. Gerstenmaier, NASA Associate Administrator for the Office of Space Operations Mission Directorate, visited with MAF employees to express appreciation for continuing tank production efforts.

June 6 – Manufacturing Support and Facilities Operations Contract (MSFOC) final Request for Proposal (RFP) released to Industry

June 21 – Michoud Employee and Family Day - Open House for on-site tenants and prime and support contractors including tours of the facility, picnic lunch and information on future work at MAF

*Below: The Artist Concept
of the Ares I Upper Stage*



*Below: Orion orbits the moon with
disc-shaped solar arrays tracking
the sun to generate electricity
Image Credit: Lockheed Martin Corp.*



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associated systems for NASA's next-generation Constellation fleet: the Ares I rocket and Ares V cargo launch vehicle and the Orion crew capsule.

Boeing will manufacture and assemble the Ares I upper stage here, and conduct avionics systems integration and checkout. Lockheed Martin will build structures here for the Orion crew exploration capsule and its Launch Abort System. In coming years the Ares V core stage and Earth departure stage will be built here. Thus Michoud will have a key role in a series of multi-billion-dollar NASA projects that will enable our nation to return to the Moon and go on to explore our solar system.

By 2011 we expect more than 600 people to be working at Michoud on Ares I and Orion alone. Many more could follow when NASA awards contracts for Ares V, requiring additional engineers, technicians and support personnel.

We also are looking beyond NASA work to maintain a robust, diversified workforce at Michoud. We have secured federal tenants to include the Department of Agriculture's National Finance Center and the Coast Guard. We expect this segment of the Michoud workforce to continue to grow in future years. On May 19, the Coast Guard announced plans to build a new \$76 million Integrated Support Command center at Michoud. Construction is expected to begin this summer and be completed in late 2010. We fully expect other opportunities to come – manufacturing and facilities operations that will require architects, civil and design engineers, maintenance, security, and support personnel.

One of the great strengths of Michoud Assembly Facility is the cooperation that exists between the State of Louisiana and the Federal Government, as well as with the business community and academia. NASA partnered with the State of Louisiana and the University of New Orleans to found the National Center for Advanced Manufacturing on-site. Louisiana elected officials are providing \$102 million to fund capital improvements and equipment for Michoud which will greatly enhance its utility and future business prospects.

Part of that funding has enabled us to break ground on a new, 120,000-square-foot Research and Development Administration Building, a sign of the progress being made at Michoud. It will open in 2010, signaling a new beginning as another chapter in Michoud's history ends.

During a recent visit, U.S. Sen. David Vitter of Louisiana stated "Michoud is absolutely at the center of this next generation activity. It is a gem, a true national asset for the Constellation program." As the Ranking Republican on the Senate Commerce Committee's Space Subcommittee, Sen. Vitter noted he is spearheading a three-prong approach to support Michoud and the transition from shuttle to the Constellation program.



*Another Conceptual rendering
of the new administration building*

*The \$76 million Integrated Support
Command Center at Michoud. Construction
is expected to begin this summer
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Griffin said. "Now is the time,
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people to meet this challenge."*

This strategy includes efforts to secure more federal dollars to accelerate Constellation, working closely with contractors -- both NASA-related and private -- to create more economic development opportunities, and building a stronger partnership with Stennis Space Center to create a Gulf Coast Center of Excellence and lure more private sector activity to the area.

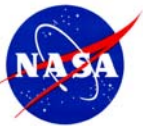
Our dedication to keeping Michoud healthy and strong focuses not just on contracts and new facilities, but on our people,

whose hard work and dedication has enabled our nation to become and remain the world leader in space exploration.

NASA is committed to making the workforce transition from shuttle to Constellation at Michoud as smooth as possible. In April, NASA signed a \$39.5 million contract modification with Lockheed Martin to implement an external tank program employee retention plan. Incentives are being provided to eligible external tank personnel to ensure mission success and construction of the remaining external tanks to support Space Shuttle Program requirements through September 2010. NASA also will work closely with industry, regional economic leaders and government agencies at every level to provide workforce retraining and job placement for external tank workers.

In March, NASA Administrator Griffin spoke at the Space Flight Suppliers Conference in Washington. His remarks sum up what's to come for Michoud, and why I'm confident the future is promising.

"We are all in this together," Griffin said. "Now is the time, this is the juncture and we are the people to meet this challenge."



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